

NAVIGATING IDENTITY CORRIDORS: UNDERSTANDING USER TYPOLOGY AND SOCIAL CONCERNS ALONG THE RAIL CORRIDOR (CENTRAL)

Ysabelle Ho

Under the supervision of Dr Gordon Tan Kuo Siong
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- 1) What is the typology of users along the Rail Corridor (Central)?
- 2) What social concerns may exist along the Rail Corridor (Central)?

BACKGROUND

The Rail Corridor's status as one of the five Identity Corridors in Singapore bears witness to its distinct character as a public greenway with a confluence of activities, including an abundance of recreational options, biodiversity and rich heritage. While diversity may make the space vibrant, the non-homogenous users and activities may cause social concerns to arise that may potentially lead to undesirable outcomes if not addressed.

Given the lack of research on the Rail Corridor after its reopening in 2021, this study first seeks to establish the profile of users along the Rail Corridor (Central). Subsequently, it analyses the social concerns of the users. This study focuses on the Rail Corridor (Central) due to its centrality, accessibility and connectivity which leads to a higher expected footfall. (Figure 1)

METHODOLOGY

A triangulation mixed method approach is adopted. Both methods sought to answer both research questions while reaching out to different segments of the population.

Walkalong interviews provide a high level of detail and context, while being resource intensive. Surveys can reach out to a large audience to gather a mass perspective of users. The overview of the research design is summarized in Figure 2.

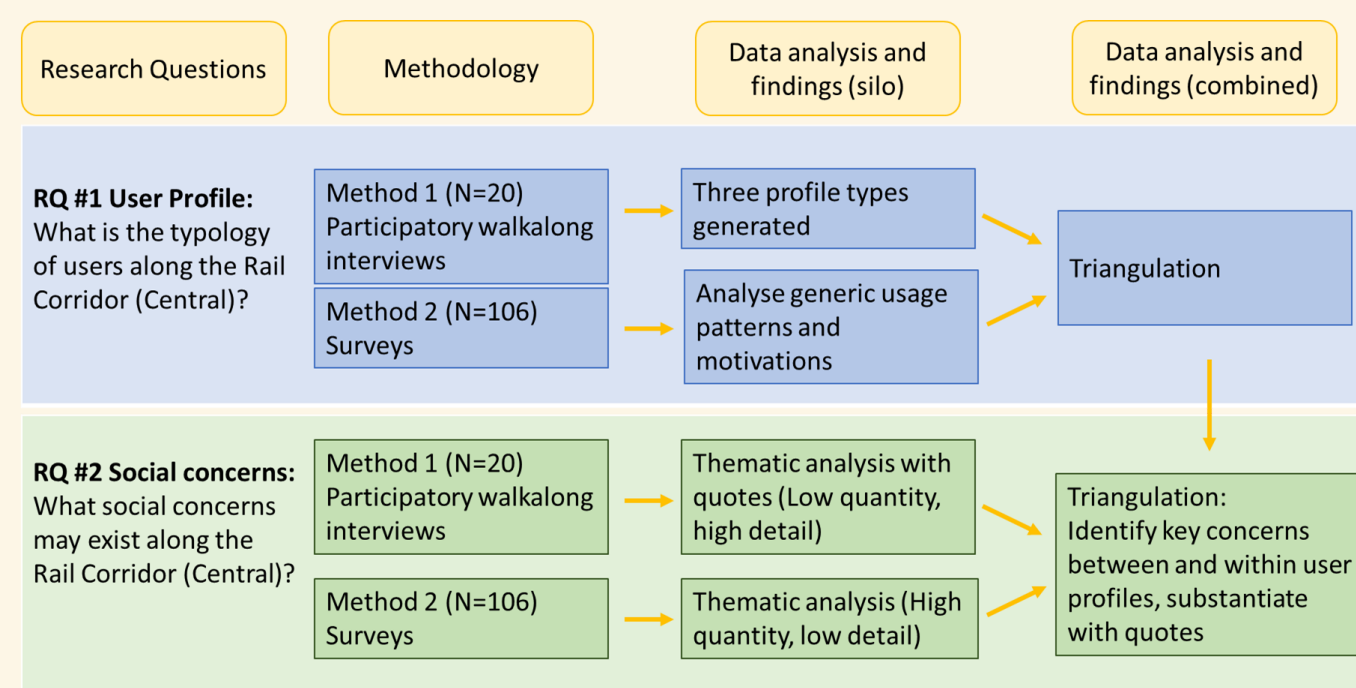


Figure 2: Overview of Research Design

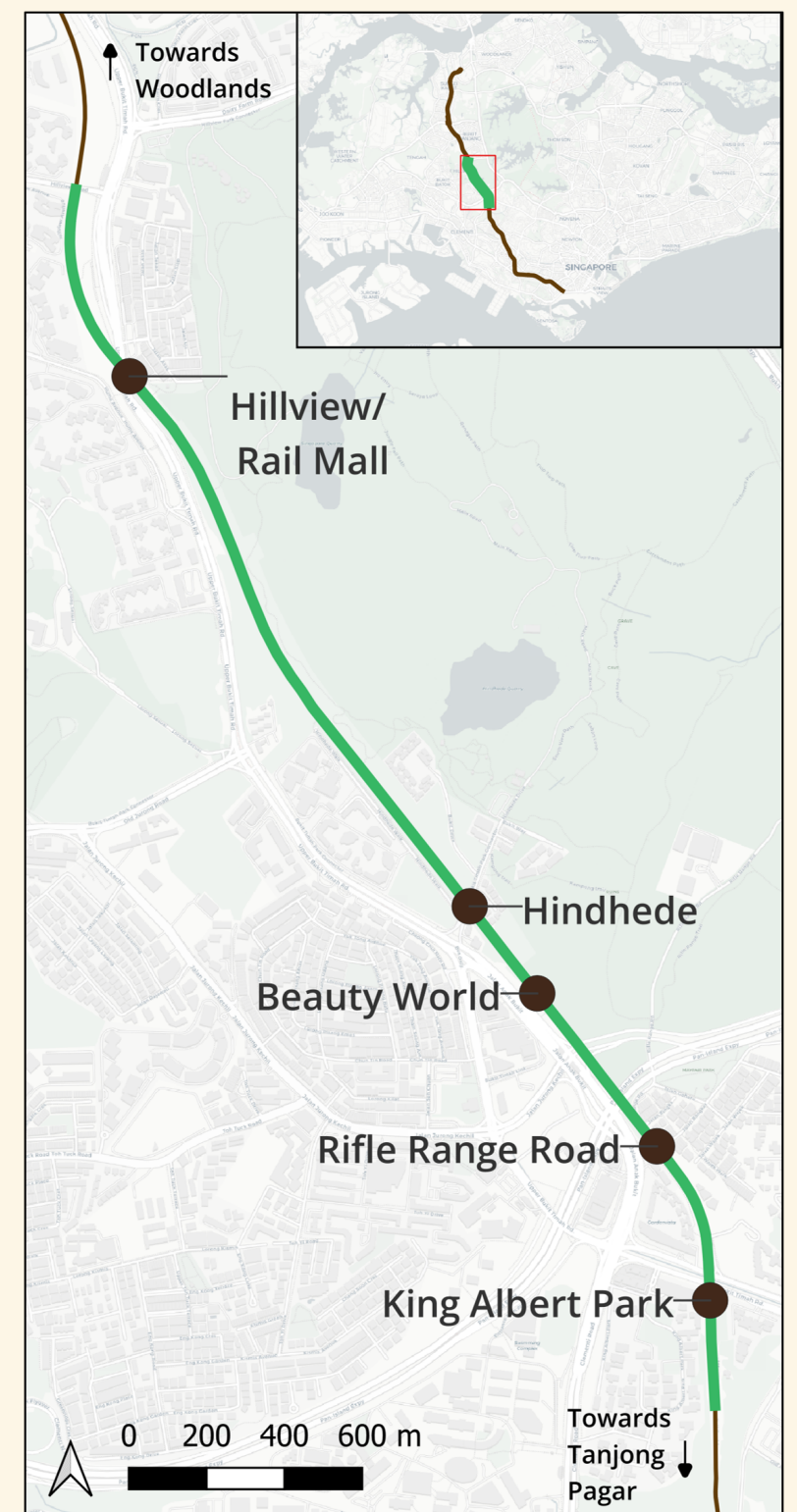


Figure 1: Map of Rail Corridor (Central) with key access points indicated (Data source: NParks)

FINDINGS - USER PROFILING

FROM SURVEYS

a) **Access:** Most respondents accessed the Rail Corridor by foot (if living nearby) and by public transport. Only one-fifth of respondents use private transport due to limited parking options. Among survey respondents, access points near MRT nodes are most commonly chosen for both entry and exiting the Rail Corridor (Central).

b) **Motivation:** Most respondents are drawn to the Rail Corridor for recreation and for stress relief. Commuters are a minority. Main considerations are: Weather conditions, crowding and the schedules of their company (especially for those that come from afar).

c) **Usage patterns:** There is a mix of walkers, joggers, and cyclists, in this order. Usage is highest across all days in the early morning and evening, although usage in the late morning on weekends is also high. Users appear to avoid afternoons where it is hotter, consistent with how hot weather conditions discourage users in b). 16% of survey respondents are non-walkers, typically of a younger demographic.

FROM WALKALONG INTERVIEWS



Avid Adventurers

Engage in more than one form of recreational activity
Use the RCC frequently, from a few times weekly to a few times daily
Typically stay along the RCC
May be solo/ in groups (families)



Neighbourhood naturewalkers

Engage in mainly walking as a discrete activity
Use the RCC frequently, daily/ a few times a week
Typically stay along the RCC
Usually solo



Weekend Wanderers

Engage in walking/running as an exploratory activity
Use the RCC rarely, up to a few times a year
Typically stay far from the RCC
Usually in social groups of 2 or more



Figure 3: Speed limit sign near Hindhede access point

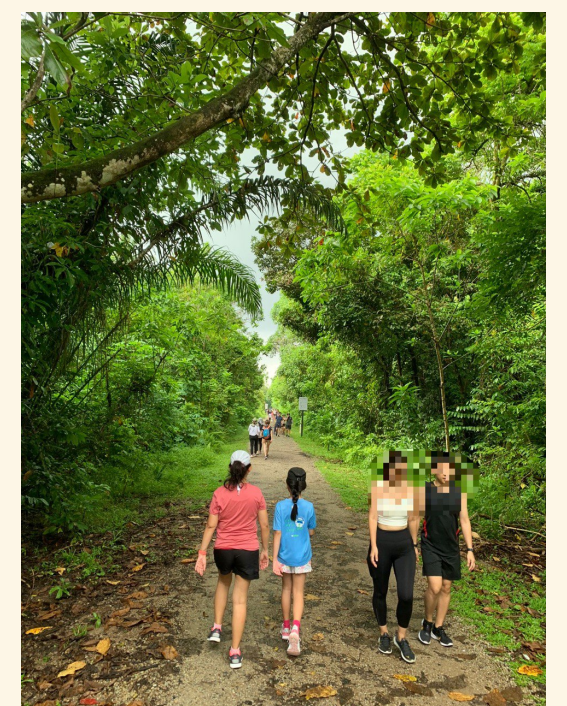


Figure 4: Rail Corridor crowd on a typical weekend

FINDINGS - SOCIAL CONCERNS

FROM THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF SURVEY AND INTERVIEW DATA

Reckless/speeding cyclists:
top concern by 1/3 of survey respondents includes speeding, not signalling, not dismounting and pushing

Crowds and congestion:
main deterring factor of usage among survey respondents while crowds are not preferred, many feel comfortable with some people around

Littering:
unpleasant; yet people do not seem to care enough

Man-introduced noise:
mixed opinions - noise pollution to some, music to others' ears. can serve as safety warning

What's next?

- Crowd management
- Parks as a place for top-down and bottom-up civic education
- Relegating some concerns to users to negotiate